

A NEW SPECIES OF *SUEZICHTHYS* (PISCES: LABRIDAE) FROM THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT

by BARRY C. RUSSELL*

Summary

RUSSELL, B. C. (1986) A new species of *Suezichthys* (Pisces: Labridae) from the Great Australian Bight. *Trans. R. Soc. S. Aust.* 110(2), 59-61, 30 May, 1986.

A new species of labrid fish, *Suezichthys bifurcatus* sp. nov., is described from two specimens collected from the Great Australian Bight, off Western Australia. It is characterised by having 2½ transverse scale rows above the lateral line; a low scaly sheath along the base of the dorsal and anal fins; and a black spot at the upper origin of the pectoral fin. It is distinct from all other species of *Suezichthys* in having lateral-line scales with a bifurcate laterosensory canal tube.

KEY WORDS: Pisces, Labridae, *Suezichthys*, new species, Great Australian Bight, Western Australia.

Introduction

Labrid fishes of the genus *Suezichthys* Smith are relatively small (maximum standard length about 140 mm), colourful fishes distributed widely throughout the tropical and temperate Indo-W. Pacific. Most of the species inhabit shallow coastal reefs but several are known only from trawl collections in offshore waters to depths of 170 m. *Suezichthys* is most closely related to *Pseudolabrus* Bleeker and *Halichoeres* Rüppell.

In a recent revision of the genus Russell (1985) recognised eight species, including six species from temperate-subtropical Australia. An additional Australian species has since come to my attention and is here described as new. The new species is based on previously unidentified specimens in the South Australian Museum (SAMA), collected by the CSIRO Fisheries Research Vessel "Soela" from the Great Australian Bight, off Western Australia.

Methods

Methods and definitions follow Russell & Randall (1981) and Russell (1985). Measurements were made to the nearest one-tenth millimeter (mm). Length measurements are standard length (SL). In the description, data for the paratype where different from the holotype, are given in parentheses.

Suezichthys bifurcatus sp. nov.

FIGS 1-2

Holotype: SAMA F5037, 69.5 mm SL, Western Australia, Great Australian Bight, "Soela" Cr. 03/81, stn 5 (34°20'S, 123°42'E-34°21'S, 123°43'E), 80 m, bottom trawl, 26.vii.1981.

Paratype: SAMA F5038, 79.1 mm SL, Western Australia, Great Australian Bight, "Soela" Cr. 03/81, stn 23 (33°04'S, 127°12'E-33°04'S, 127°10'E), 92-98 m, bottom trawl, 1.viii.1981.

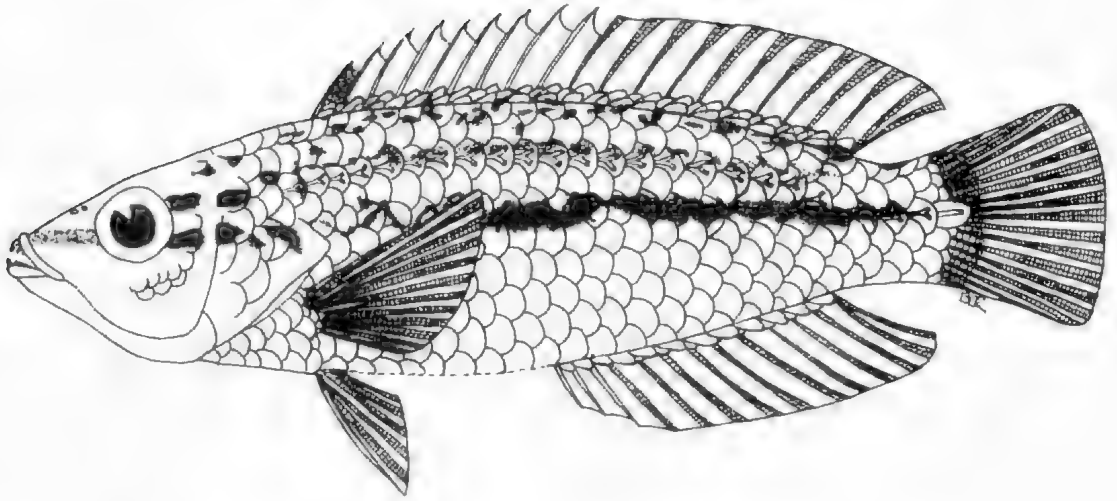
Diagnosis: Laterosensory canal tubes bifurcate; 2½ transverse scale rows above lateral line; low scaly sheath along base of dorsal and anal fins; black spot present at upper origin of pectoral fin.

Description: Dorsal-fin rays IX, 11; anal-fin rays III, 10; caudal-fin rays 6+2+12+2+5; pectoral-fin rays ii, 11; pelvic-fin rays 1, 5; lateral-line scales partly missing, 25? in holotype (25? in paratype); transverse scale rows above lateral line 2½; transverse scale rows below lateral line 7½ (scales missing in paratype); cheek scale rows behind eye 1; cheek scale rows below eye 2? (scales partly missing in both specimens); vertebrae 9+16; epipleural ribs extending to V.13; well-developed haemal arch formed only on V.10; gill rakers on first arch 18 (16).

Body depth 3.7 (3.3) in SL; head length 2.8 (2.7) in SL; snout length 4.2 (4.1) in head length; diameter of orbit 3.6 (3.8) in head length; interorbital width 6.0 (5.8) in head length; suborbital depth 7.8 (8.2) in head length; dorsal fin length 1.8; first dorsal spine 4.5 (4.8) in head length; ninth dorsal spine 1.6 (1.3) times length of first; ninth or tenth dorsal ray longest, 1.0 (1.6) times length of ninth dorsal spine; anal fin length 1.3 (1.2) in SL; first anal spine 6.3 (7.0) in head length; third anal spine 1.6 (2.1) times length of first; ninth anal ray longest, 1.3 (1.2) times length of third anal spine; pectoral fin length 1.6 (1.5) in head length; pelvic fin length 1.6 (1.5) in head length.

Upper jaw with pair of enlarged, recurved canines anteriorly; 12-14 progressively smaller canine teeth laterally in upper jaw, with inner row of 6-8 small canines behind anteriormost teeth; enlarged canine

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10 mm

Fig. 1. *Suezichthys bifurcatus*, Holotype, SAMA F5037, 69.5 mm SL (drawing based on damaged specimen preserved in alcohol).

at posterior end of upper jaw; lower jaw with 2 pair of enlarged anterior canines, second pair shorter than first; 12-14 progressively smaller lateral teeth in lower jaw, with inner row of 3-4 small canines behind anteriormost teeth.

Laterosensory canal tubes bifurcate; low scaly sheath at base of dorsal and anal fins; caudal fin truncate to slightly rounded.

Colour (in alcohol): Holotype (Fig. 1) light brownish, pale on sides; faint dusky band from tip of snout to anterior margin of eye, continuing behind eye as dark brown, broken band running along midline of body to caudal peduncle; series of two or three dark brown spots behind eye immediately above first band, these joining an indistinct and irregular brownish band running



Fig. 2. *Suezichthys bifurcatus*, Paratype, SAMA F5038, 79.1 mm SL

parallel above first band and terminating near end of dorsal fin; dark brown spot on nape and indefinite brown markings (scales missing) on scaly base of dorsal fin; distinct black spot at base of last two dorsal-fin rays, and indefinite black spot dorsally on caudal-fin base. Interspinous membrane of first two dorsal spines dusky, and indications of dusky submarginal band along fin; small black spot on upper pectoral-fin base.

Paratype (Fig. 2) with faint dusky band from snout to eye, but otherwise lacking any bands along body; four to five brownish irregular spots along scaly base of soft dorsal fin, posteriormost spot slightly darker and extending onto base of last three dorsal-fin rays; blackish mark dorsally on caudal-fin base; first dorsal spine dusky; black spot on upper pectoral-fin base.

Etymology: The name *bifurcatus* refers to the bifurcate laterosensory canal tube of this species.

Comparisons: *Suezichthys bifurcatus* appears most closely related to *S. arquatus* Russell and *S. cyanolaemus* Russell. These two species share the following combination of characters with *S. bifurcatus*: 2½ transverse scale rows above the lateral line, a low scaly sheath at the base of the dorsal and anal fins, and a well-developed haemal arch associated only with the anterior caudal

vertebra (V.10). *S. bifurcatus* is distinct from all of its congeners, however, in having lateral-line scales with a bifurcate laterosensory canal tube (versus simple, unbranched canal tube in other *Suezichthys*).

Remarks: Known only from two specimens, both in poor condition, trawled in moderately deep water (80–98 m) from the Great Australian Bight, off Western Australia.

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A NEW STREAM-DWELLING SPECIES OF LITORIA (ANURA: HYLIDAE) FROM NEW GUINEA

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Summary

Litoria exophthalmia sp. nov. is described from localities at elevations of 730-850 m on the southern face of the cordillera of mainland New Guinea. The species is of moderate size (34-39 mm), and characterised by protruding eyes, basally webbed fingers and by the lack of a vocal sac in the male. The species is morphologically so distinctive that it is regarded the unique representative of a separate species group.